TWO BABIES.

On the well-worn stoop of an humble home
In a clean though narrow street,
While the day as yet was young and fair
As the springtime sun was sweet,
Sat an aged man in decent garb,
With a look half vague, half sad,
And he held the hand in his trembling clasp
Of a sturdy four-year lad.

Said a voice: "Now, dad, don't you quit the steps—
Take good care gran'pa, John, dear!"
Such a knowing nod as the baby gave!—
But the old man did not hear.
Yet he pressed more firmly the soft wee hand,
Sought the eyes so quick and bright,
And protecting love just as clearly felt
As the warmth of vernal light.

Ah, I wondered how and of what they talked,
Those two children in the sun;
Did the babe of age and the babe of youth
Find their plane of being one?
And I thought I might, could I learn that tongue,
Make of life the burden plain,
Till perhaps the tired in His love would sit,
As in light the babies twain.
—L. Mitchell, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

CAPTAIN CLOSE

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES KING.

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VIII.

As he rushed around to the southern side of the old house—the side whence all this uproar proceeded—Lambert came suddenly upon two dim, swaying figures. The one nearest him—that of a man—was clutching, throttling, apparently, a slighter form in white, a woman. The butt of his revolver straightened out the dark figure with one crack, and then for a moment everything was darkness and confusion. A lamp, held by some screaming female at a neighboring window, was dropped with a crash. The screams subsided to scurry and chatter and Ethiopian protestations and furious demands: "You Elinor! you black nigguh—you let me out this room instantly!" Then rush of footsteps to the window again, and tragic appeals: "Mamma—ma-amma! Whut's happened? Do answer? Do make Elinor let me go to you, or Ah'll jump out this window. Ah'm comin' now." And, indeed, a dim, slender form could be descried, arrayed in white, bending low from the casement, when Burns with his lantern came tearing around the corner. Then a majestic voice, imperious even though well-nigh breathless, was heard: "Katherine, return to your bed instantly. Do you hear? Instantly! And send Elinor to me."

That Katherine shot back within the sheltering blinds was possibly due not so much to the impetus given her by those imperative orders as to that imparted by the sight of a pair of shoulderstraps and the face of the young officer gazing in bewilderment above him. Well might he look amazed! At his feet on the pathway Private Riggs was sprawling, half stunned by the blow he had received. On his back amidst the wreck of a glass hot-bed, Private Murphy was clutching at empty air and calling on all the saints in the Hibernian calendar to rescue him from the hands of that old bedlam. On the pathway, in a loose wrapper, her bosom heaving with mingled wrath and exhaustion, one hand firmly clutching a stout cane, the other clasping together at her white neck the shreds of her torn and dishevelled garb, her dark eyes flashing fire, her lips quivering, stood a woman certainly not 50 years of age, despite the silver in the beautiful hair streaming down upon her shoulders and the deep lines of grief and care in her clear-cut and thoroughbred face. She leaned heavily on the stick an instant, but raised it threateningly as the luckless Murphy strove to sit up and stanch the blood trickling from his lacerated hands and face.

"Don't you dare to move, suh," she panted, "unless—" And the uplifted cane supplied, most suggestively, the ellipsis.

"Oh, fur the luv o' God, ma-am, don't hit me ag'in! Sure, I'd niver prezhoome, ma'am—"

"Shut up, Murphy!" growled Burns. "It's easy to see what brought you here. Shall I let Riggs up, lieutenant? He's bleeding a good deal."

But Riggs didn't want to get up. He flopped helplessly back upon the grass-plot. Burns bent over and held his lantern close. "The man's drunk, sir," he said—"and cut."

"I did that, I presume," said Lambert, still a little out of breath after the dash to the rescue. "I found him daring to lay hands on this lady. Madame, I sincerely hope you are not injured. It is impossible for me to say how I deplore this outrage. These men shall suffer for it, I assure you."

With rapid step the corporal of the guard, bringing with him a couple of men and another lantern, came hurriedly to the scene and stood silent and alert, glancing eagerly from face to face. Two or three frightened negroes had crept around the rear portico and hung trembling behind their mistress. With a shawl thrown over her head and shoulders, a quadroon girl halted half way down the steps from the side door, her eyes dilated, and her lips twitching in terror, until a low voice from within bade her go on, and a tall, dark-haired, pale-faced girl in long, loose wrapper fairly pushed her forward and then stepped quickly to the elder woman's side.

"Go back to the house at once, my child. This is no place for you. Go to Katherine and tell her I say she must not leave her bed. Go!" And, silently as she came, but with an infinite and evident reluctance, the tall girl turned and obeyed. Mrs. Walton had spoken slowly and with effort. Of Mr. Lambert and his party she had as yet taken no notice whatever. Again Murphy began to squirm in his uncomfortable couch of mingled mud and broken glass and head lettuce, and the crackling accompaniment to his moaning once more made him the object of the lady's attention.

"Lie still, suh," she said, low and sternly. "You have broken moh glass now, suh, than youh captain can replace. Lie still whuh you are until my suhvants lift you out—Henry!" she called.

"Ye-assum," was the answer, as one of the negroes came reluctantly forward, humbly twirling a battered hat in his hands.

"Go fetch your barrow."

"Indeed, Mrs. Walton," interposed Lambert, "you need not trouble yourself. The guard shall carry these two scoundrels to camp, and prison life at Ship island or Tortugas will put a stop to their prowling. It is on your account I am distressed. We have no surgeon at hand; I will send at once for a doctor in town—"

She raised a slender white hand, relinquishing her grasp upon the cane, which now went clattering upon the gravel of the walk. It was a sign to check him, and respectfully he broke off in his hurried words. Then again she turned to the negro, who stood with twitching face, irresolute, beside her.

"Did you hear me, Henry? Go."

Again Riggs began to groan and stretch forth feeble hands. Burns looked appealingly to his young officer, then as appealingly to the lady. Clearly, she was mistress of the situation. Lambert had quickly stooped and picked up the cane, but she did not see, apparently, that he wished to restore it to her. In the light of the lanterns the mark of Riggs' clutch was plainly visible at her white and rounded throat.

"Two of you lift this fellow," said Burns to the corporal; and between them Riggs was heaved to his sprawling feet. "Get him over to camp now and bathe his head. Put a bayonet through him if he tries to bolt. I'll be there presently."

And of Riggs, her assailant, and of Riggs' removal under guard, the lady of the Walton homestead took no note whatever. Rebuffed, yet sympathetic, Lambert again essayed to speak, but the rattle of the barrow was heard and Henry once more loomed up within the zone of lantern light.

"Lift that—puhson—out," she said. And when Burns would have lent a helping hand she interposed: "No, I beg you. My suhvants will attend to this." And neither Lambert nor his sergeant made further effort. Murphy, lifted from the wreck of the ruined hot-bed, abject and crestfallen, scratched and bruised and bleeding, yet neither so deadened by drink nor so stunned by the rain of blows which he had suffered as not to appreciate the humiliation of his position, was squatted in the barrow. At an imperious gesture from Mme. Walton Henry started to wheel him away, the corporal of the guard in close attendance.

And then, with calm dignity and recovered breath, the lady turned to the boy officer:

"I have not thanked you yet—"

"Oh, Mrs. Walton, I beg you not to speak of thanks. If you knew how—how ashamed I am, and that my regiment will be—that any of our men could have dared—" The very intensity of the young fellow's indignation choked him and gave her the floor.

"Once before this they came, and then I warned. This time, having no men to call up" (negroes, it seems, could not be counted as such), "I was compelled myself to chastise. May I ask the safe return of our barrow—it is the only vehicle the war has left us—and that we may now be permitted to retire?" And she swept a stately courtesy.

"But, madam—" began Lambert, utterly chagrined at the attitude of cold and determined avoidance in which she persisted, "you have been brutally handled; I insist on sending for our contract doctor; it is the best we can offer to-night—"

"Neither to-night, nor at any other time, would his suhvices be acceptable, suh. I need no doctoh. We learned—we had to learn—how to do without luxuries of every kind during the war; and Dr. Hand—I think that is the name of the physician you refer to—would be too much of a luxury at any time. I regret that your men should need his suhvices, but they brought it on themselves."

"They will need him more before the captain gets through with 'em, ma'am," said Sergt. Burns, seeing that his young superior was at a loss what to say. As he spoke, the tall, dark-haired girl once more appeared, and swiftly, noiselessly stepped to her mother's side. "There'd be no need of a court-martial or of your having to testify, if Capt. Close could settle this—or let us do it."

"Mother, come in—please do—and let these gentlemen go," said the girl. "Indeed, we are very much obliged to you," she continued, addressing Lambert, "for coming so quickly. That one, who seemed intoxicated, might have killed mother, who is far from strong. They had opened the cellar door, you see." And she pointed to where the broad wooden leaf had been turned back, leaving a black, yawning chasm.

"Your mother is faint," cried Lambert, springing forward just in time, for, now that victory was perched upon her banners, the foe soundly thrashed and driven from the field, nature—woman-like—had reasserted herself, and the lady of Walton Hall would have sunk to earth but for the strong young arms that received her. Then came renewed outcry from within-doors. Miss Katherine could not have obeyed the maternal mandate, for there she was at the window, insistent, clamorous. "Bring her right in hyuh!" she cried. "Do you hyuh what I say, Estuh? Oh, who day-uhd to lock me in this room? You Elinor! open this do' instantly, I tell you!"

A moment later, when, by the light of Burns' lantern, now in Miss Esther's trembling grasp, the two men bore the limp and nerveless shape into the nearest room and laid it reverently upon the sofa, a wild-eyed and dishevelled young woman threw herself at her mother's side and began chafing and slapping the slender white hands and begging all manner of absurd and impossible things of the prostrate, pallid, death-like form. Elinor, who had obeyed orders and locked the impulsive damsel in, had now released her and then collapsed.

"Do not try to raise her head," said Lambert, gently, to the frightened child, who, having exhausted one effort, was now striving to revive her mother with passionate kisses. "We must restore the circulation to the brain. Pardon me; have you a little brandy? or whisky?"

"There isn't a drop in the house," said Miss Walton, piteously. "We had some, that had been in the cellar for years, that mother hid during the war; but—you—it was being stolen, or something—and she sold what was left."

Burns quickly left the room. When he returned, a few minutes later, he held forth a little flask. Mrs. Walton still lay senseless, and her condition was alarming to one and all. Lambert poured out a stiff dose. "Make her take it all, little by little," he whispered to Miss Walton, and then, with calm decision, stooped, and, encircling the slender waist of the younger girl with his arm, quickly lifted her to her feet. A tress of her rich, red-brown hair was caught in his shoulder-strap, but neither noticed it. Such was the patient's prostration that for a moment even brandy failed of its stimulating effect. Not until several spoonfuls had been forced between her blue lips did there come that shivering sigh that tells of reviving consciousness. The white hands began feebly to pluck at her dress and the heavy eyelids to open slowly. "We will fall back," whispered Lambert. "I'll wait in the hall."

But when he turned to tiptoe away, a very touzled, tangled, dishevelled, but pretty head had to come, too. There was too much of that fine, shining, shimmering tress to let go. Burns was already creaking out into the dark passage. Miss Walton was absorbed in her mother's face. Miss Katherine's rounded cheek had flushed as red as the invalid's was white, and both her tiny hands were madly tugging and pulling at the offending tendrils; but who could work to advantage with the back or side of one's head practically clamped to the work bench? Miss Katherine could not tear herself loose except at the risk of carrying away a square inch or more of scalp, for the strap would not yield, and its wearer could not help so long as her own hands were tugging. There was every likelihood, therefore, that the tableau on which Mme. Walton's opening eyes should gaze would be about the very last she would care to see—the bonnie head of her precious child reposing, to all appearance, on a shoulder

Bore the limp shape into the nearest room.

in Yankee blue—when Lambert, alive to the desperate nature of the situation, quickly cast loose the two or three buttons of the flannel sack coat then so much in vogue, and, slipping out of that and into the hall, rejoined his imperturbable sergeant.

"I hope the lieutenant will pardon my taking his flask. I saw it in the tent this evening, sir, and the captain didn't leave the key of the medical chest—with me, leastwise."

"You did right. That was some good cognac they got for me in New Orleans. I hope it will revive her. Ought we not to send for Dr. Hand?"

"No, sir," whispered Burns. "She wouldn't have him for one of her niggers—and be damned to them. I know now where Riggs had been getting his liquor, and where our coffee and sugar has been going. He's bribed these thieving servants of hers to steal that precious brandy, and those damn scoundrels broke into the cellar to-night to get more."

"But they must have been drinking in the first place. Where could they have got that liquor? Hers was gone—sold."

"In town, somewhere. I'll find out—" But here the lieutenant checked him. A feeble voice was just audible in the adjoining room:

"Have they gone? Have I been ill? Esther—daughter, see that—No! I must see that young officer, at once."

"Not to-night, mother," answered the elder girl, pleadingly. "Not to-night. To-morrow; you'll be rested then."

"That may be too late. Whatever happens, there must be no court-martial. He said I should have to testify; so would you. You saw, Esther, and if under oath we should have to tell—"

"Quick! Come out of this!" whispered Lambert, hoarsely, and dragged the sergeant after him to the dark and wind-swept shadows of the yard.

IX.

Sunday morning came, gloomy, cloudy, with the wind still moaning among the almost leafless branches and whirling dust-clouds from the crooked road. After a night of so much excitement camp slept late. Lambert was aroused somewhere about seven by a scratching at the tent flap, and Sergt. Burns, answering the summons to "come in," poked his freshly shaved face through a framing of white canvas to ask if he might send the lieutenant some breakfast from the cook-fire. It was barely 24 hours since his arrival in camp, and so crowded had these hours been with event, experience and novelty that the young officer seemed to feel he had been a month on duty. There lay his blue flannel blouse at the foot of his cot. Unseen hands had tossed it from the window at which on his first appearance the previous night a slender, white-robed form had been piteously crying for help. He drew it to him and searched the left shoulder strap. Yes! Even now three or four curling hairs were twining like the tendrils of a vine about its dead-gold border and across the field of sky-blue velvet—another vogue to the day. "She had time to disentangle the mass, but could not see these fine filaments in so dim a light," he laughed to himself. "Only fancy what my Merrimac madre would say if she were to hear that a pretty head—a southern girl's head—had been resting on my shoulder the very first night I got here! Only fancy what the damsel herself would say, if she had a chance to say anything! And as her mamma—well, what wouldn't she say?"

Lambert had lots to think of as he made his soldier toilet and came forth into the gloomy, moisture-laiden air, for the southeasterly wind was sweeping the rain clouds up from the distant gulf, and nature looked bleak and dismal. Two items occurred to give him comfort. No sooner had he stepped out into the open space than the one sentry at the other end of the camp shouted: "Turn out the guard—commanding officer!' which was unnecessary at the distance and under the circumstances, yet clearly proved that the disposition among the men was to "brace up" in recognition of the arrival of an officer who knew what discipline meant.

And then, looking suspiciously as though he had been waiting for a chance to undo the ill effect of his blunder of the previous day, there in front of Burns' tent stood Corporal Cunningham, company clerk; and the salute with which he honored the camp commander was as pregnant with good intent as it was clumsy in execution. Somebody had placed an empty clothing box by the side of the tent, covered it with canvas fly, and set this improvised table for one with the best tins the company mess afforded. Somebody else had carefully blacked the lieutenant's boots and shoes, and presently up came a young German soldier bearing the lieutenant's breakfast on the company cook's breadboard, which was covered with a clean white towel.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BUILDING OF ROME'S COLISEUM.

Convicts Were Compelled to Do the Work by Pope Pius VII.

The Coliseum was made to stand forever. If we gaze at it from the east side, where it appears still intact, we are forced to exclude the possibility of a spontaneous collapse of such a substantial structure. Yet the repeated concussions of the earth in the fifth century may have caused a crack or rent like the one which cuts the Pantheon on the side of the via dell Palombella. If such an accident occurred in the Pantheon in a solid wall 15 feet thick, built by such an experienced architect as Hadrian, it is even more likely to have happened in the Coliseum, the outer belt of it being of stones without cement, and pierced by three rows of arcades and one row of windows. The equilibrium once destroyed, the results are obvious, especially if we remember how quickly arborescent plants and trees take root and prosper in the dry soil of an abandoned building. The stones on the edges of the crack must have been lifted or wrenched from their sockets by the roots wedged themselves into the joists and acting as levers. Readers familiar with the vignettes of the Coliseum of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries will remember how exactly they represent this process of disintegration of the ages, stone by stone. When Pius VII. determined to build the great buttress to support the edge of the outer belt on the side of the via di S. Giovanni in Laterno he was obliged to employ convicts serving for life, promising them a reduction in the terms of imprisonment if they succeeded in propping it up. The danger was such that the forest timber used in the scaffolding could not be removed while the masons were progressing with their work, but had to be left imbedded in the thickness of the supporting walls.—Atlantic.

Her Preference.

The judgment of men is apt to be warped by sentiment and feeling. In Scotland the people abominated hymns simply because the Episcopalians used them. The Presbyterians sang only the Psalms of David. The Episcopalians used stained glass in their church windows, and for that reason the Scotch looked upon stained glass as something of unholy origin. A Presbyterian minister had been bold enough to introduce this hated innovation. He was showing it in triumph to one of his female parishioners, and asked her how she liked it. "Ay!" she said; "ou ay; it is bonny. Eh! but I prefer the gless just as God made it!"—Youth's Companion.

He Evidently Was Quibbling.

"I will write you a good recommendation as to your working ability," said 'Rastus' employer, who had been forced to part with him because of the mysterious disappearance of sundry small articles, "but I am afraid I can't say much for your honesty."

"Tell you, Mr. Blackwell," said 'Rastus, after a moment's thought; "yo' might put in de words dat I is as honest as I kin be, kain't you?"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

HOUSEHOLD WISDOM.

It Consists in Avoiding the Small Stumbling Blocks.

A young girl once heard a bit of wisdom from the lips of a very aged woman—a woman who had rounded the full term of 90 years, and with eyes still bright and clear looked out upon the inrolling waters of eternity. The girl was impressed by the emphasis with which the venerable dame said to her: "Bessie, never insist on having the last word." The determination to have the final word leads to more quarrels and more bitterness of feeling at home than almost anything else in domestic life. The fact is, that one may so control her tongue and her eyes that she may allow her opponent the pleasure of this coveted concluding thrust, and yet placidly retain her own opinion, and in the homely colloquial parlance of the up-country, where one finds strong-willed people living together in great peace with the most pronounced diversity of characteristics, "do as she's a mind to."

Another bit of wisdom may be condensed into a pithy sentence: avoid explanations. In some families nothing is taken for granted. Every action, every decision, every new departure, every acceptance or rejection of an invitation, must be endlessly talked and fussed over, explained and reexplained. In that way lie all sorts of stumbling blocks. As a rule, beyond your parents or your husband there is nobody who has the right to demand of you explanations at each step of your onward path. Don't give them. Establish a reputation for keeping your own counsel. It will serve you well in many a crisis, and be no end of a comfort.

Again, don't be forever setting people right. There is a household fiend with a memory for dates and details, who can never sit still and hear papa say that he went downtown on Monday at eight, without correcting the statement with the remark that the hour was half past. If mamma happens to allude to Cousin Jenny's visit as having occurred last Thursday, this waspish impersonation of accuracy interposes with the statement that it was Friday not Thursday which brought Cousin Jane. A dozen times a day exasperating frictions are caused by needless corrections of this sort, reflections of this sort, referring to matters where exactness is not really imperative, the affairs in question being unimportant, and no violation of truth being for an instant intended.

A manifest bit of wisdom is to refrain from criticism of food. The sauce may not be quite piquant enough, the salad may be wilted, but in the name of decency say nothing about it in either case.

Silence is golden in nearly every instance where a defect obtains in the home economy.

To abstain from superfluous apologies is also the habit of discretion.

There should seldom be the occasion for apology in the household, where all would do well and wisely to be constantly gentle and courteous.—Woman's Home Journal.

TO SLEEP WELL.

How to Properly Court the Indulgence of Nature's Sweet Restorer.

A light supper just before retiring is usually of advantage. Babies and brute animals are usually somnolent when their stomachs are well supplied with food, the activity of the stomach withdrawing the excess of blood from the brain, where it is not needed during sleep. On the other hand, people who are very hungry usually find it difficult to sleep. And, then, a habit of sleep at a regular time and during proper hours should be cultivated in case this habit has been lost. In accomplishing this the attainment of a favorable state of mind is of great importance. Sleep cannot be enforced by a direct exercise of the will.

The very effort of the will to command sleep is enough to render its attainment nugatory. The mental state to be encouraged is one of quiescence, one of indifference, a feeling that the recumbent posture is a proper one for rest, and that if the thoughts are disposed to continue active they may be safely allowed to take their course without any effort toward control. This state of mind and thought is next akin to dreams, and dreaming is next akin to sound sleep.

Many mental methods have been advised and put in practice for the purpose of securing sleep, the design being to turn the thoughts from objects of interest to a condition of monotony, as by mentally repeating well-remembered phrases or sentences or by counting. But the state of indifference, if this can be obtained, is likely to be the most efficient, as being the least active. The mere mention of these simple methods will be sufficient to suggest others equally effective.—Medical Record.

Cocoanut Ice.

Put one pound of the best loaf sugar, broken into lumps, into a saucepan and pour over it one-half pint of water; let this stand for half an hour, and then place it on the fire and allow it to cool for five or six minutes; remove the scum and boil the sugar until it is thick and white, then stir into it one-quarter of a pound of the white of a fresh cocoanut, finely grated; stir unceasingly until it rises in a mass in the pan, then spread it as quickly as possible over sheets of paper which have been dried before the fire; remove the paper before the ice is quite cold, and let it dry.—Boston Globe.

Auntie's Molasses Candy.

One cupful of molasses, two cupfuls of sugar, one cupful of water and one tablespoonful of vinegar. Just before it is done add a small piece of butter. Let all but the butter boil briskly without stirring until crisp threads will fall from a spoon (about half an hour), then pour into buttered platters or pans. Commence to pull as soon as it is cool enough to handle. Another way to test is to drop some of the boiling mixture into cold water, and if crisp it is ready to cool.—Boston Budget.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

—"The pay of a Greek soldier is about four dollars a month." "Well, they give him a good run for his money."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

—"Well, Miss Molly, so there's a new baby, is there? Which is it, a boy or a girl?" "Why, nobody doesn't know yet, 'cause it hasn't been christened."—Fun.

—She—"Are you sure you will like married life as well as you do your club?" He—"Oh, yes!" She—"And are you so awfully fond of your club?" He—"Not very."—Tit-Bits.

—Little Willie—"Pa, why do they call them 'minor poets'? Pa—"Because they ought to be working with the pick and shovel instead of writing poetry, my son."—Cleveland Leader.

—Mrs. Brown—"I am the mother of seven boys. Do you wonder that I am a breadmaker?" Mrs. Jones—"I am the mother of seven girls. Do you wonder that I am a match-maker?"—Truth.

—Misunderstood.—"Why, all the world's awheel!" exclaimed Sprocket, enthusiastically. "That's just like you bicycle fellows," grumbled Grumpy. "You want the earth."—Philadelphia North American.

—A Martyr to the Craze.—"What a silly young man that pretty Miss Camington married." "Yes; how did it happen?" "It wasn't her fault. He was one of her mother's bargains."—Chicago Record.

—"Well, did he pay you anything?" asked the business manager. "Yes," replied the female collector; "he paid me a compliment. "He said he wouldn't be afraid to trust me with the money if he had any."—Yonkers Statesman.

—A railway contractor recently advertised for 300 wooden sleepers. By return of post he received a letter from a neighboring clergyman offering him the whole of his congregation on reasonable terms.—Saturday Review.

—"There's no such thing as perfect contentment," remarked Widow Gilgan. "When John was alive I was half the time worried as to his whereabouts, and even now there is an uncertainty that still makes me uneasy."—Boston Transcript.

—A Worldly Antithesis.—Mrs. Van Schlesinger—"I think the Sweetly brothers are thoroughly charming. They belong to that nearly extinct genus, 'In the world, but not of it.'" Miss Sharp—"Do you, indeed? I always considered them rather a common species of the world, but not in it, you know."—Harlem Life.

BIG MONEY.

Prices Paid for Some of the Choicest Articles in the World.

The costliest building of modern times is the state capitol at Albany, which has already had spent upon it the immense sum of $20,000,000.

The highest price ever paid for a horse was that given for the mighty race horse Ormonde, which totaled up to no less than $150,000. It should be remembered that this famous horse never lost a race in all his career on the turf.

Apart from race horses the largest sum paid for a horse was that of $125,000 which Senator Stanford gave for Arion in 1892 to Mr. Forbes, of Boston.

The most expensive government—that is, as far as the legislature is concerned—is that of the French. They pay for it the sum of $3,750,000 annually.

The costliest paintings of modern times have been Meissonier's "1814" and Millet's "Angelus." M. Chauchard gave $175,000 for "1814" and $150,000 for the "Angelus." These two paintings are, in the opinion of all connoisseurs, quite worth their money, which is more than can be said for all the things which have cost a large amount.

The shah of Persia, who owns so many valuable articles of jewelry and fancy goods, is the possessor of what is doubtless the most expensive pipe in the world, it being worth some $400,000. The whole of the long stem and bowl are simply incrusted with jewels.

There is a book, a Hebrew Bible, in the vatican library which Pope Julius II. refused to sell for its weight in gold; and as this would have totaled $165,000 this may be taken as the most valuable book in the world.

The greatest sum ever asked or offered for a single diamond is $2,150,000, which the nizam of Hyderabad agreed to give Mr. Jacobs, the famous jeweler of Simla, for the "Imperial" diamond. This is now considered the finest stone in the world.

For a cane that was once the property of George III. and afterward of George IV. the sum of $9,000 was given at an auction in London. It was an ebony walking stick, with a gold top, engraved "G. R.," and with a crown, and also contained some locks of hair of Princesses Elizabeth, Mary and Sophia.

To the shah of Persia and the sultan of Turkey belongs the honor of possessing the finest mats on the globe. Each of the mats is partly made of pearls and diamonds, and is valued at $2,500,000.

The largest carpet ever made was for the Carlton club; it is a superb specimen, and cost $40,000.

The late Col. North's greyhound Fullerton, which won the Waterloo cup four times, sold for $5,000, which is the highest price ever paid for a sporting dog. The well-known St. Bernard, Plinlimmon, however, fetched some $21,250 a few years ago.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

She Didn't.

"This," said the school friend who had not seen her for a year—"this is the girl who vowed to me that she would never belong to any man, eh?"

"I don't," said she, who had been married the matter of some few months or so. "He belongs to me."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Judicial Decision.

"Why do so few women seek admission to the bar, judge?"

"Because they would rather lay down the law than take it up."—Detroit Free Press.